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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2746

December 29, 1995

GLICKMAN IMPROVES REPAYMENT OPTIONS FOR PRODUCERS -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced (December 22) that wheat, feed grains, and upland cotton producers who must repay their 1995-crop advance deficiency payments will be able to repay under more equitable terms than in the past. Those producers will likely owe about \$1.7 billion in the latter part of 1996. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation will propose changes in current regulations to give producers expanded repayment options, including the option to repay in installments over a three-year period, with all of the interest waived, depending on a producer's circumstances. USDA has no legal authority to waive repayment of advance deficiency payments. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "I'm especially concerned about producers who did not have a 1995 crop and are still required by law to repay their advance deficiency payments. To ease their financial burden, my proposed action will allow them to repay over three years with no interest. These actions will affect about 90 percent of the producers of these crops. We're nearing the end of the year and we still have no Farm Bill." **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

PROPOSAL TO EXPAND SETTLEMENT OPTIONS -- The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, requires program participants to repay all advance deficiency payments when the 12-month average price for a crop exceeds the established target price. Only producers who can show financial hardship through a lengthy paperwork process are eligible for a 3 year installment plan, possibly with interest waived. Secretary Glickman's proposal would allow the following: Producers who repay within the first forty-five days of the billing date will be charged no interest, as is current practice. Additionally, producers may opt to have the Farm Service Agency automatically offset their debt with other payments due to them under the Conservation Reserve Program or other farm programs, excluding crop insurance and farm loans. If the amount owed is not repaid by the 46th day, interest will begin accruing at the lowest rate possible. All producers will be offered the option to repay in installments over a three-year period. In two instances, all interest on the installment payments will be waived: 1) producers received an indemnity payment under either "buy-up" or catastrophic crop insurance coverage for the crop; or 2) producers can show satisfactory evidence of their inability to pay the amount due in full. For those who do not meet these two requirements, interest will begin accruing on the forty-sixth day from the billing date at the rate the U.S. Treasury charges the CCC for borrowing. **Contact: Tom Amontree (202) 720-4623.**

SPECIAL UPLAND COTTON QUOTA #17 -- High cotton prices have triggered another special import quota that will permit the importation of a quantity of upland cotton equal to one week's domestic mill use, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced (December 21). The special import quota that will permit the importation of 43,657,604 kilograms (96,248,619 pounds) of upland cotton is being established on Dec. 27. The quota applies to upland cotton purchased not later than Mar. 25, 1996, and entered into the U.S. not later than June 23, 1996. **Contact: Janise Zygmont (202) 720-8841.**

USDA ACCEPTS MORE THAN 683,000 ACRES INTO CRP -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced (December 21) that 683,390 acres of highly erodible and other environmentally-sensitive cropland have been accepted into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The CRP provides annual rental payment to farmers and landowners who retire environmentally-sensitive acreage from crop production and has been tremendously beneficial for producers and the general public. Among the changes was automatic top environmental ranking of acreage offered for establishment to field windbreaks, grass waterways, shallow water areas for wildlife, filterstrips and shelterbelts. In addition, bids involving filterstrips and riparian buffers received a 10 percent higher bid cap. These practices are especially important because of their role in protecting and enhancing water quality and providing wildlife habitat. Over 33,900 acres of filterstrips have been enrolled. This is an increase of over 2,700 percent above the 1,227 acres enrolled in the 12th signup. Approximately 1.18 million acres had been offered during the 13th CRP signup, held September 11-22, to replace acreage withdrawn under the 'early-out' opportunity offered earlier this year. While preliminary estimates indicated approximately 651,000 acres had been withdrawn, the final figure was 683,390. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

GLICKMAN ANNOUNCES FOOD RESCUE AND GLEANING RESOURCES -- As part of the holiday season, Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman emphasized the importance of gleaning and food rescue efforts to assist those less fortunate throughout the nation. He encouraged individuals to call 1-800-5-HUNGRY to obtain information about gleaning and food rescue programs in their local areas. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "Food should not go to waste, especially during the holiday season. We should make every effort to share food that may otherwise not be used, whether it be in a restaurant, grocery store, or our homes. This 800 number is a resource which can connect businesses and individuals to local gleaning and food rescue programs." The 800 number is one of many efforts USDA will be undertaking to enhance gleaning and food rescue throughout the nation. The 1-800-5-HUNGRY number will provide information about local and national gleaning and food rescue programs and services. The Department of Agriculture hosted a December 8th roundtable on gleaning and food rescue efforts. During the roundtable, participants identified additional actions which will be taken in the new year to continue and enhance gleaning and food rescue efforts. **Contact: Johna Pierce (202) 720-4623.**

WOTEKI NAMED TO RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS POST -- Catherine Woteki has been named deputy under secretary of agriculture for research, education, and economics, Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman announced (December 21). As deputy under secretary, Woteki will assist in the management of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service; the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; the Economic Research Service; and the National Agricultural Statistics Service. She will help oversee national and international research and educational activities in pest management, livestock diseases, food safety and nutrition, improved crop and livestock production, and sustainable agriculture. Prior to her appointment as deputy under secretary, Woteki served as the acting associate director for science at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. She joined that staff in 1994 as the deputy associate director and provided leadership on the administration's policy relating to science and technology. **Contact: Maria Bynum (202) 720-5192.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #2013 -- Private sector and government agencies are assessing their organizations which means layoffs or lots of people. On this edition of **AGRICULTURE USA** Brenna Curtis talks with University of Maryland extension specialists on how to cope when you are out of work. (Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME #1492 -- Cooking with a reduced income. Creating healthy and tasty meals for schools. Conflict resolution. Bankruptcy, the only way out of debt. Turning on the water in rural America. (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

AGRITAPE #2005 -- Net farm income may rise in 1996, while net cash income declines. More land into CRP. BST use expected to increase modestly. The farm market possibilities of the Ukraine. Is Extension still vital to farmers? (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Wednesday, January 10, cotton crop report. Thursday, January 11, full crop production report, grain stocks, rice stocks, winter wheat and rye seedings, cotton: world markets and trade. Monday, January 15, HOLIDAY. Tuesday, January 16, milk production report and weekly weather and crop outlook. These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

ACTUALITIES: More from our "year end" interview with Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

FEATURES: World Union of Wholesale Markets Congress in Baltimore, 2:00. Patrick O'Leary reports on the recent meeting of the World Union of Wholesale Markets in Baltimore, Maryland. Members from seventy nations, including representatives from USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, gathered to share ideas about selling farm produce and other goods. (Feature is repeated without the narration track.) SCRIPT for this feature is available by FAX: Use your FAX machine phone to call (202) 690-3944; at prompt, press 9270.

NEW COORDINATES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 4: Thursdays, 3:45-4:00 p.m. ET on Telstar 402R, Transponder 13 (Vertical), Downlink Frequency 3960 MHz (89 degrees West), Audio, 6.2/6.8.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry Quinn, (202)720-6072, or write to: Room 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300. Internet E-mail: LQuinn@USDA.GOV.

OFF MIKE

NEW PRESIDENT...of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB) as 1996 begins is **John Winfield** (Mississippi Network, Jackson, MS). John already has chaired his first executive committee meeting and is excited about several new changes that members recently approved which he believes will invigorate NAFB. His personal goal is to actively pursue this new organizational structure to increase the stature of what NAFB does for both agriculture and its members. Also, John is taking a stronger leadership role with Mississippi Network where he now directs operations of his network's news, sports and agricultural services. Due to his increased responsibilities, however, John will end his appearances on a six-station agricultural TV program this month.

FARM OF THE WEEK...is a popular regular feature with listeners who tune in **Jay Rudolph** (KFIZ, Fond du Lac, WI). This is an interview that Jay does on-location while describing crops, livestock and history of the farm featured. He's been a farm broadcaster for the past five of his 10 years with the station. He was a sportscaster before he began his "play-by-play" coverage of agriculture. KFIZ will sponsor the local 17th Annual Farm Expo on January 4-5. One of the key farm seminars scheduled will be on milk futures trading.

FRIEND OF EXTENSION...Award was presented recently to **Tom Beavers** (KMA, Shenandoah, IA) by Iowa State University. He was one of three recipients honored "for dedicated support of Extension programs."

STRAY VOLTAGE...may be the culprit which has caused the dairy herd loss that **Lori Struve** (WCUB, Manitowoc, WI) reported to us earlier this month. Lori says that engineers and veterinarians were taking measurements this week. The farm family is seeking through a court action to have an electric transformer moved further away from their dairy barn. Meanwhile, two more cows and 10 calves were lost last week.

Larry A. Quinn
LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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